

that conceptual extension may reveal more than it obscures (225). Still, because he does not examine such cases in detail, his analysis of objectionable linguistic expansions remains imprecise.

Sophie Grace Chappell's essay defending the doctrine of double effect (DDE) is a highlight of the volume. She uses Wittgenstein-inspired arguments to argue that intentions, like mental states generally, are essentially public. An agent's intentions are linked to what action-types are ascribable to her given her behavior, chosen means, and circumstances. This ascribability is, in turn, determined by convention in a way analogous to how the meanings of speech acts depend on convention. Thus we uncover the morally significant difference between familiar cases like Surgeon and Trolley: any interpreter competent with our conventions would ascribe a killing intention to the organ-harvesting surgeon, but not to the trolley-turner. Chappell's arguments are too rich to do justice to here. For instance, she provocatively argues that internalism about intention would collapse the DDE into consequentialism and that while the DDE is helpful for addressing some moral conundrums, it is not the relevant casuistic device in many of the cases to which it has been applied. Her account falters in its Wittgensteinian reliance on convention, which is vulnerable to the consequentialist rebuttal that folk psychological conventions are often incoherent and require radical revision. When considering particular examples, moreover, Chappell appeals to *reasons* rather than directly to conventions to explain why we take a certain result to be (un)intended. It is these reasons, we suggest, that ultimately decide between "conventional" understandings of actions/intentions and their consequentialist rivals.

Considered as a whole, the volume is uneven, as is typical of essay collections. Further, its ideal audience also is not obvious. Philosophers may find some of the general treatments of Wittgenstein on religious language useful (including for students) and will find some of the ethical contributions thought-provoking, but likely will be unengaged by the theological essays. Theologians and religious ethicists are likeliest to be interested in all the topics treated, but may well find the theological contributions the most stylistically difficult—and rather disappointing in substance.

Religious Ethics and Constructivism: A Metaethical Inquiry, edited by Kevin Jung. Routledge, 2018. Pp. 209. \$140.00 (hardcover).

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Philosophy of religion has traditionally been dominated by work in metaphysics and epistemology. The relationship between theistic belief and



ethical theory, especially metaethics, has been relatively ignored. Kevin Jung's edited collection of essays, *Religious Ethics and Constructivism*, aims to address this neglect by bringing together a range of voices to reflect on the relationship between theistic commitments and constructivist metaethics. In his introduction, Jung indicates that this project was undertaken in response to the growing number of religious thinkers who entertain or endorse antirealist constructivist metaethics (8). He writes, "[M]any contemporary religious thinkers see religious morality as a human construction that reflects the contingent needs, interests, or attitudes of religious practitioners" (8). At the same time, however, he thinks these thinkers have not thought carefully about what it means to say that morality is a "human construction" or what such a view implies. Thus, the aim of the book is "to discuss the merits of constructivism vis-à-vis religious ethics" (8). The extent to which the essays included in the book contribute to this end, however, varies significantly.

The first three essays all advocate some form of constructivism. One of the challenges of exploring the relationship between theistic belief and constructivist metaethics is that "constructivism" refers to a wide range of views. The book includes discussions of four broad types of constructivism: Kantian, Humean, Hegelian, and theistic constructivism. But each of these types of constructivism can itself encompass several variations, as Jung himself notices. Indeed, one of the strengths of this book is the solid overview of constructivism and its many varieties provided by Jung in the introduction. Typically, the many different types of constructivism differ in how "thoroughgoing" their constructivism is: Are all normative concepts constructed? Only some? Which ones? Paul Weithman, for instance, defends the view that distributive justice is constructed, much in the way that baseball is constructed: distributive justice is a game of social cooperation. Kevin Kinghorn, by contrast, endorses a more thoroughgoing (but still restricted) constructivism when he argues that *wrongness* is constructed, while Molly Farneth argues that we should not simply be constructivists about the truth of normative claims or our entitlement to our normative commitments (like the Kantians), but that we should be constructivists about the *semantics* of normative claims.

The quality of each of their contributions to the project of assessing "the merits of constructivism vis-à-vis religious ethics" (8) varies inversely with how thoroughgoing their constructivism is. I'm not sure this is *entirely* coincidental. The more restricted one's constructivism, the more one can appeal to resources outside of constructivism to assuage concerns raised by theists. Weithman, for instance, responding to the objection that the constructivist's social ideal is not the same as the Christian ideal, claims that the constructivist social ideal he defends is not the whole of ethics: he is merely claiming that distributive justice is a social cooperation game that involves the construction of a *certain kind* of ideal, but not that this ideal tells us everything there is to know about how things ought to be. Thus, Weithman can make room for appeals to realist properties or divine

commands or whatever grounding of normative properties his interlocutor might prefer. It is only this one aspect of moral life that he claims is constructed by humans. That said, I do not think this is the only reason Weithman was the most successful at engaging theistic concerns.

In his defense of Humean constructivism, Kevin Kinghorn responds to a number of possible objections, but I do not think he engages the most serious concerns about his view. Kinghorn is only a constructivist about wrongness; he thinks there *are* facts about goodness and badness. (He is a welfarist about goodness, another controversial position for a theist, but I am only going to engage his constructivism here.) When an action is sufficiently bad that someone, upon reflection, forms the intent to sanction it, then it is wrong (47–48). We might pause here to ask some questions. (1) Is an action wrong whenever *anyone*, upon reflection, forms the intent to sanction? If not, who has the standing to determine what's wrong? Kinghorn seems to think only in terms of our individual judgments of wrongness and says that our judgments are correct or incorrect insofar as the judgment is entailed by one's evaluative standpoint, but this seems like an uneasy position for a theist, who will likely want to say that God's judgments of right and wrong are correct and that any judgments we have that conflict with God's are incorrect. Furthermore, we might wonder (2) why a realist cannot endorse the view that an action is wrong when it crosses a certain threshold of badness, and that this is a fact about the action. Kinghorn seems to assume that realism is always non-natural: "Is there something *beyond* these facts about others' intent to sanction? Are governing bodies recognizing some non-natural facts about rights and ownership and wrongness—and then announcing their intent to sanction as a response to these facts" (48)? But why build non-naturalness into the question? Perhaps wrongness is a natural property reducible to other natural properties. Finally, (3) Kinghorn's account simply seems an odd view of wrongness, as there does not seem to be any conceptual incoherence in judging an action wrong in the absence of *anyone's* forming an intent to sanction.

These concerns take on added force when raised from a theistic perspective. This should already be apparent in my discussion of the first question: Who has authority to form the intent to sanction? It would seem natural for a theist to point to God as the ultimate authority on wrongness. But my second point shows that Kinghorn hasn't given us adequate reason to prefer his view to alternative theistic views. Finally, my third point might also prompt a theist to turn to God: though we humans might sometimes decline to form the intent to sanction something we judge wrong, God is perfectly just and this might entail that God always forms the intent to sanction wrong action (I'm not convinced by this move, but I could imagine someone pursuing it). But once you turn to God in response to either my first or third questions, it seems like you have abandoned Humean constructivism for theistic constructivism.

Of the three opening chapters, Farneth's does the least to further reflection on the plausibility of constructivism from a theistic perspective.

As I explained above, Farneth argues for a Hegelian constructivism that extends to the semantics of normative claims. In her own words:

By calling attention to Hegel's semantics, I aim to bring out the possible significance of a 'Hegelian constructivism' for contemporary metaethics. In what follows, I outline Hegel's account of the construction of the content or meaning of candidates for normative truth or falsity and suggest what follows from that account in terms of normativity, authority, and truth. This, then, sets the stage for a conversation with Kantian constructivists about what might be missing from that account and what the implications of an explicit semantics might be. (66)

Notice that her outline of what she will do in this essay makes no mention of theism or religious ethics, and rightly so: the relationship between Hegelian constructivism and religious ethics simply isn't her concern in this chapter. As a piece of philosophy, her essay is interesting and thought-provoking for those already engaged in the constructivist project (though I wish she had said more about why some might resist extending their constructivist project to the semantics of normative principles). However, the basis for her essay's inclusion in this volume seems tenuous at best: she discusses Hegel's treatment of the principle "love thy neighbor as thyself" and observes that some theists might be uncomfortable with Hegelian semantics. Having made that observation, she does not engage any substantive arguments that they should or should *not* be okay with Hegelian semantics; she merely notes that some theologians talk in ways compatible with Hegelian semantics. But why should I care if some theologians talk this way? I'm interested in whether theists *should* have problems with Hegelian semantics. If so, why? If not, why not?

The strongest contribution to this collection, given its stated aim, is Christian Miller's essay. He directly takes on the project of the book, giving accounts of constructivism and theism before assessing how plausible constructivism is given theistic commitment. Miller differentiates types of constructivism based on *who* is doing the relevant construction. Thus, there are secular types of constructivism, in which the construction is done by actual humans, hypothetical humans, or hypothetical non-human beings; but there is also theistic constructivism, in which an actual divine being does the construction. Miller argues, first, that "there are good reasons to favor theistic over hypothetical constructivism and no good reasons (or at least not as good reasons) to do the reverse" (88). Second, he points out that constructivism of certain sorts will have a hard time explaining normative properties attributed to God, as when theists claim that God is good, just, wise, etc. (90).

Miller acknowledges that his arguments only give us *prima facie* evidence against secular constructivism, especially in light of the wide variety of constructivisms. However, he also illustrates how his argument works against three existing secular constructivist theories. It is also telling that, even prior to reading Miller's piece, I was essentially applying his first argument to Kinghorn's constructivism: Why would a theist be a Humean

constructivist rather than a theistic constructivist? Miller's second argument works best against thoroughgoing forms of constructivism, since it seems that not *all* normative and evaluative concepts can be constructed if we are going to attribute goodness, justice, wisdom, etc. to God. However, some more restricted forms of constructivism might be plausible, particularly constructivism about deontic concepts. Miller concludes that a theist could plausibly be a restricted theistic constructivist about deontic concepts. There are still questions to answer: Why be a theistic constructivist rather than a realist? What kind of theistic constructivism is most plausible? One that grounds deontic properties in divine commands? Divine virtues? Divine desires? Are deontic properties identical to/caused by/constituted by divine commands/virtues/desires? But there is room for a theist to embrace certain forms of constructivism.

The next two essays, chapters 5 and 6, are more historically oriented. Charles Lockwood critiques Kantian constructivism both as incoherent in its own right and as a bad interpretation of Kant. He claims that Kantian constructivists read Kant as grounding moral content in autonomy, but in fact Kant arrives at autonomy as a solution to a puzzle about moral motivation—not moral content. Furthermore, he maintains that this reading of Kant is friendlier to theism. Indeed, part of his argument for his reading of Kant is that it makes better sense of Kant's inclusion of God in the Kingdom of Ends. Lockwood even goes so far as to entertain the possibility that Kant's ethics might be compatible with certain versions of divine command theory. I'm largely convinced by Lockwood's argument against constructivist readings of Kant. I do find the inclusion of this essay in this book somewhat puzzling as it isn't ultimately about constructivism's merits from a theistic point of view. Rather, it is arguing that Kant's own ethic is both non-constructivist and "robustly theistic" (124).

David Clairmont's contribution is essentially a "compare and contrast" piece on Jeffrey Stout's Hegelian constructivism and Jean Porter's revisionist natural law theory. He seems more sympathetic to Porter, but the piece isn't really an argument for one view over the other so much as an exploration of their different understandings of nature and its intelligibility. One of the more interesting suggestions Clairmont makes is that Porter's revisionist natural law theory might, in fact, be more truly Hegelian than Stout's Hegelian constructivism because Stout denies that nature has any moral significance independently of what reason imposes on it, whereas Hegel seems to think that rational consciousness can discern patterns in nature that serve as models for that rational consciousness (146–147). This chapter also provides the only sustained engagement with a prominent constructivist religious ethicist.

The final chapter, by Kevin Jung, is a critique of Christine Korsgaard's Kantian constructivism and Sharon Street's Humean constructivism, both of which are thoroughgoing constructivist theories. Though Jung raises some distinctively theistic concerns early on (Why wouldn't God evaluate the world by God's own standards rather than ours? Why would God

allow us to ground all normative facts in our attitudes rather than God's? [178–179]), he mostly rehearses some well-established criticisms of their views not grounded in theism. His most interesting work is in his discussion of the relationship between moral goodness and divine willing at the end of his essay. Having advocated a realist position on which moral goodness is grounded in “natural facts concerning the flourishing of life in general” (201), a theist might naturally wonder how Jung thinks God's will is related to moral goodness. Following John Duns Scotus, Jung distinguishes between God's willing and God's willing for our willing, and contends that God's willing for our willing includes “God's intentional endorsement of things that are intrinsically good or bad” (200, emphasis in original). Facts about value are in some sense independent of God, but God's willing for our willing tracks moral goodness.

In short, this collection of essays aims to take on an important issue: assessing a group of prominent antirealist metaethical views from a theistic standpoint. However, scholars interested in this question would be best served to focus on certain essays, beginning with Christian Miller's and then turning their attention to those essays that deal with the versions of constructivism that most interest them. Some of the essays don't really discuss the interaction of constructivism with theistic belief, but do discuss interactions between other ethical views and theism, like Lockwood's and Jung's essays (though both pieces discuss Kantian constructivism). Still other essays discuss constructivism, but don't really engage theistic concerns, such as Farneth's piece, though those interested in Hegelian constructivism may profit from reading her piece. The book as a whole does not provide the sustained reflection on the merits of constructivism from a theistic perspective that one might have expected, but it does have moments of clear and useful engagement on this topic. And, at the very least, it has initiated a much-needed discussion about metaethics and theism.

Thomas Aquinas on Moral Wrongdoing, by Colleen McCluskey. Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. xiii + 198. \$110.00 (hardcover), \$28.99 (paperback).

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“Evil as a philosophical topic has arrived” (4). With these words, Colleen McCluskey wraps up a brief look at the recent history of the topic of her book, “the attempt to explain wrongdoing on its own terms” (2). As she notes, certain issues concerning evil have been getting serious attention for quite some time. Most notable in this regard is the theological problem

